

island to Puerto Rico; to facilitate transit back and forth between Vieques and the main island; to do a lot of the other environmental and economic things on the island of Vieques; to have no live fire in the short run here while we're going through this transition period; to cut the training days in half; and then to let the people decide for themselves with the future of the island is; but to give us a transition period when we don't have any other place to train—it is a perfectly reasonable compromise, unless either those first two things are eating at you, so you don't trust anything America or the Pentagon does or unless you're just philosophically opposed to America having a military which has to train.

So I still believe it's a good agreement. I will continue to work with the Governor, with the Mayor in Vieques, with the authorities, with a view toward trying to work this out. I want the people of Puerto Rico to decide this. You know, I did a message to them. I wish they could decide their status. If it were just up to me, if I could sign an Executive order and let them have a sanctioned election, I would do it today. And I view this compromise as an empowerment of the people of Puerto Rico and, to that extent, a ratification of their longstanding grievances.

But the people of Vieques should be able to decide this. And I don't think that—just as I don't think the Pentagon should impose it on them, I don't think the demonstrators should stop them from having a vote either. I think they ought to be able to make a judgment.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 186th news conference began at 2:25 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Nicholas Kunselman and Stephanie Hart, students at Columbine High School, Littleton, CO, who were murdered in a Subway sandwich shop on February 14; Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; Gov. George H. Ryan of Illinois; former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; Gen. John de Chastelain, Canadian Defense Forces, chair, Independent International Commission on Decommissioning; David Trimble, leader, Ulster Unionist Party; Gov. Pedro Rossello of Puerto Rico; and Mayor Manuela Santiago of Vieques, PR. Reporters referred to Mayor Rudolph W.

Giuliani of New York City; Judge Susan Webber Wright, U.S. District Court for Arkansas, who presided over the Paula Jones suit against the President; and former Senator Bill Bradley. The President also referred to LIHEAP, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

### **Proclamation 7273—To Facilitate Positive Adjustment to Competition From Imports of Certain Steel Wire Rod**

*February 16, 2000*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

1. On July 12, 1999, the United States International Trade Commission (USITC) transmitted to the President a report on its investigation under section 202 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "Trade Act") (19 U.S.C. 2252), with respect to imports of certain steel wire rod provided for in subheadings 7213.91, 7213.99, 7227.20 and 7227.90.60 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS). The USITC commissioners were equally divided with respect to the determination required under section 202(b) of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2252(b)) regarding whether such steel wire rod is being imported into the United States in such increased quantities as to be a substantial cause of serious injury, or threat of serious injury, to the domestic industry producing a like or directly competitive article.

2. Section 330(d)(1) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (the "Tariff Act") (19 U.S.C. 1330(d)(1)) provides that when the USITC is required to determine under section 202(b) of the Trade Act whether increased imports of an article are a substantial cause of serious injury, or the threat thereof, and the commissioners voting are equally divided with respect to such determination, then the determination agreed upon by either group of commissioners may be considered by the President as the determination of the USITC. Having reviewed the determinations of both groups of commissioners, I have decided to consider the determination of the group of commissioners voting in the

affirmative to be the determination of the USITC.

3. Pursuant to section 311(a) of the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (the “NAFTA Implementation Act”) (19 U.S.C. 3371(a)), the USITC made negative findings with respect to imports of steel wire rod from Mexico and Canada. The USITC commissioners voting in the affirmative also transmitted to the President their recommendations made pursuant to section 202(e) of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2252(e)) with respect to the action that would address the serious injury or threat thereof to the domestic industry and be most effective in facilitating the efforts of the domestic industry to make a positive adjustment to import competition.

4. Pursuant to section 203 of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2253), and after taking into account the considerations specified in section 203(a)(2) of the Trade Act, I have determined to implement action of a type described in section 203(a)(3) and to provide exclusions for enumerated steel wire rod products (“excluded products”). Pursuant to section 312(a) of the NAFTA Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 3372(a)), I have determined that imports of steel wire rod from Mexico, considered individually, do not account for a substantial share of total imports and do not contribute importantly to the serious injury, or threat of serious injury, found by the USITC, and that imports from Canada, considered individually, do not contribute importantly to such injury or threat. Accordingly, pursuant to section 312(b) of the NAFTA Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 3372(b)), I have excluded steel wire rod the product of Mexico or Canada from the action I am taking under section 203 of the Trade Act.

5. Such action shall take the form of a tariff-rate quota on imports of steel wire rod (other than excluded products), provided for in HTS subheadings 7213.91, 7213.99, 7227.20 and 7227.90.60, imposed for a period of 3 years plus 1 day, with annual increases in the within-quota quantities and annual reductions in the rate of duty applicable to goods entered in excess of those quantities in the second and third years, as provided for in the Annex to this proclamation.

6. Except for products of Mexico and of Canada, which shall all be excluded from this restriction, such tariff-rate quota shall apply to imports of steel wire rod from all countries. Pursuant to section 203(a)(1)(A) of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2253(a)(1)(A)), I have further determined that this action will facilitate efforts by the domestic industry to make a positive adjustment to import competition and provide greater economic and social benefits than costs.

7. Section 604 of the Trade Act, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2483), authorizes the President to embody in the HTS the substance of the relevant provisions of that Act, and of other acts affecting import treatment, and actions thereunder, including the removal, modification, continuance, or imposition of any rate of duty or other import restriction.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, acting under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including but not limited to sections 203 and 604 of the Trade Act, do proclaim that:

(1) In order to establish a tariff-rate quota on imports of steel wire rod (other than excluded products), classified in HTS subheadings 7213.91, 7213.99, 7227.20 and 7227.90.60, subchapter III of chapter 99 of the HTS is modified as provided in the Annex to this proclamation.

(2) Such imported steel wire rod that is the product of Mexico or of Canada shall be excluded from the tariff-rate quota established by this proclamation, and such imports shall not be counted toward the tariff-rate quota limits that trigger the over-quota rates of duty.

(3) I hereby suspend, pursuant to section 503(c)(1) of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(1)), duty-free treatment for steel wire rod the product of beneficiary countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) (Title V of the Trade Act, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2461–2467)); pursuant to section 213(e)(1) of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act, as amended (CBERA) (19 U.S.C. 2703(e)(1)), duty-free treatment for steel wire rod the product of beneficiary countries under that Act (19 U.S.C. 2701–2707), pursuant to section

204(d)(1) of the Andean Trade Preference Act, as amended (ATPA) (19 U.S.C. 3203(d)(1)), duty-free treatment for steel wire rod the product of beneficiary countries under that Act (19 U.S.C. 3201–3206); and pursuant to section 403(a) of the Trade and Tariff Act of 1984 (19 U.S.C. 2112 note), duty-free treatment for steel wire rod the product of Israel under the United States-Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act of 1985 (the “IFTA Act”) (19 U.S.C. 2112 note), to the extent necessary to apply the tariff-rate quota to those products, as specified in the Annex to this proclamation.

(4) During each of the first three quarters of a quota year, any articles subject to the tariff-rate quota that are entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, in excess of one-third of the annual within-quota quantity for that quota year (as specified in the Annex to this proclamation) shall be subject to the over-quota rate of duty then in effect. During the fourth quarter of a quota year, any articles subject to the tariff-rate quota that are entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, in excess of the remaining quantity of the annual within-quota quantity for that quota year shall be subject to the over-quota rate of duty then in effect. The remaining quantity shall be determined by subtracting the total quantity of goods entered at the in-quota rate during the first three quarters of the quota year from the annual within-quota quantity for that quota year.

(5) Effective at the close of March 1, 2003, or at the close of the date which may earlier be proclaimed by the President as the termination of the import relief set forth in the Annex to this proclamation, the suspension of duty-free treatment under the GSP, the CBERA, the ATPA and the IFTA Act shall terminate, unless otherwise provided in such later proclamation, and qualifying goods the product of beneficiary countries or of Israel entered under such programs shall again be eligible for duty-free treatment.

(6) Effective at the close of March 1, 2004, or such other date that is one year from the close of this relief, the U.S. note and tariff provisions established in the Annex to this proclamation shall be deleted from the HTS.

(7) Any provisions of previous proclamations and Executive orders that are inconsistent with the actions taken in this proclamation are superseded to the extent of such inconsistency.

(8) The modifications to the HTS made by this proclamation, including the Annex hereto, shall be effective with respect to goods entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after March 1, 2000, and shall continue in effect as provided in the Annex to this proclamation, unless such actions are earlier expressly modified or terminated.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:42 a.m., February 17, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on February 18.

## **Memorandum on Imports of Steel Wire Rod**

*February 16, 2000*

*Memorandum for the Secretary of the Treasury, the United States Trade Representative*

*Subject: Action Under Section 203 of the Trade Act of 1974 Concerning Steel Wire Rod*

On July 12, 1999, the United States International Trade Commission (USITC) submitted a report to me of its investigation under section 202 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the “Trade Act”), with respect to imports of steel wire rod. The USITC commissioners were equally divided in their determinations under section 202(b) of the Trade Act of whether steel wire rod is being imported into the United States in such increased quantities as to be a substantial cause of serious injury or threat of serious injury to the domestic steel wire rod industry. The report also contained negative findings by the ITC pursuant to section 311(a) of the North